

A Successful Date Is a Safe Date



ONLINE DATING SAFETY TIPS

With busy work schedules and the time-consuming demands of everyday life, more people are turning to online dating when looking for love. It is not uncommon to hear a couple say that they met on an online dating site. While dating can be exciting, there are safety steps that every person should follow while dating—both online and offline. Here are a few tips.

Online Communication Safety Tips

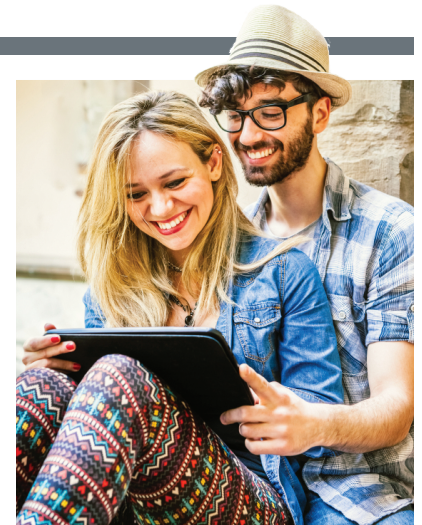
- Use a disposable email account for contact purposes.
- Don't give out your home phone number or address.
- After you've emailed for a while and decide to talk on the telephone, be wary of someone who only wants you to call a cell phone number or a work number. That's a possible sign that there's a spouse or another friend in the picture.
- Block the telephone number if you don't want to hear from someone again or if you find the person undesirable for any reason.

Meeting Up

Meet in Public Places—While a late night dinner and a movie sounds very romantic, for safety reasons try scheduling your date during the day in a public place. Never meet your date at his or her home. If possible, arrange to go with another couple or a group of friends.

Trust Your Gut—If you ever have a suspicious feeling about someone you have been communicating with or out on a date with, follow

your instinct. Immediately stop all communications with anyone who makes you feel uncomfortable. If you are on a date, excuse yourself and call a friend to come and get you.



Backup—Enlist a friend to be your backup. Be sure to let him or her know as much as you can about your date and where you are planning to go. Arrange to check in with your friend every hour to let him or her know that you are okay.

Pass on the Cocktails—Do not get intoxicated. No one ever makes great decisions when they have been drinking. Keep a clear mind to avoid impairing your judgment, which could put you into a dangerous situation.

Never go home with a stranger on the first date or bring him or her back to your place.

For more information on online dating and other topics, log on to www.ncpc.org/Smarter.



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